

Portage Area High School

85 Mountain Avenue • Portage, PA 15946-1898 • (814) 736-9636 • E.O.E. • Fax (814) 736-9597

I first had the opportunity to hear Debbie Fowler speak about "Remembering Adam" at a regional Student Assistance Conference. As a parent of two and an educator for the past 33 years, her story had an enormous impact on me. Her message was one that I felt needed to be told in my community.

The following school year arrangements were made for Mrs. Fowler to speak to our faculty at an in service meeting. Our teachers' response to her presentation was overwhelming. Portage Area School District is not immune to problems facing all schools. We wanted to take a pro active stand to fight the problems related to illicit drug use. We invited Deb back to speak to our student body. She took several school days to accomplish this as she spoke to small groups of students. Our students' reaction to the presentation was very moving. They asked many questions and shared personal insights with Mrs. Fowler.

I was informed of the plans of Remembering Adam to institute a voluntary drug screening program. As the guidance counselor in our high school and as the chairperson of our Student Assistance team I felt this was something that would be great for Portage Area students. Debbie presented the program to our Superintendent and School board and received their wholehearted endorsement.

I am very proud to say that our district is one of the first in our area to have a voluntary drug screening program. This is our 4th year for the program and we have 313 students participating out of a student body comprised of 402 students!

Having the volunteer screening program gives our students the opportunity to take a stand against illegal drugs. It allows them to let their peers, parents, and community know that they are drug free, proud of it, and not afraid to let people know it!

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Being a member of the "Remembering Adam" Club gives students a reason to stay clear of illicit drugs; they can tell their friends that they may be screened. With so many of our students taking part in the program it allows positive peer pressure to work. Our drug free students know they are not alone!

Since we have had the program at Portage Area we have seen a significant decrease in the number of referrals made to our SAP team.

"Remembering Adam" sponsors activities for our members. These activities allow our students to meet other students from other schools and enjoy a drug-free time!

I believe so strongly in what "Remembering Adam" stands for that I have become a member of the Remembering Adam Board of Directors. I feel that nothing can be compared to the success of this program.

Sincerely,



Douglas J. Conlon